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Editorial : in Memoriam Růžena Dostálová (22.4.1924 Bratislava – 18.8.2014 Prague)

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Editorial

In Memoriam Růžena Dostálová (22. 4. 1924 Bratislava – 18. 8. 2014 Prague)

At the close of last summer, Růžena Dostálová, the doyenne of Greek Studies in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, passed on at the age of 90. An internationally renowned scholar in the field of Late Antique, Byzantine, and Modern Greek Literature, and of the relationship between Greek and Czech culture, she was also a beloved teacher to generations of Czech students of Classical Philology, and Byzantine and Modern Greek studies, including the editors of the present volume.

A Charles University graduate in Classical Philology and Modern Greek, Prof. Dostálová began her professional career in 1953 in the *Department of Classical Studies* of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, where she was soon made editorial chief of the journal *Folia Philologica (Listy Filologické)*. She also served for many years in department administration. During periods when the political situation in the socialist state allowed, she also taught in the *Department of Greek and Latin Studies* at Charles University. She was, however, only able to develop her pedagogical activities to the fullest extent after the fall of socialism in Eastern Europe.

And so it was that in 1989, at an age many people exit active working life, Růžena Dostálová began to build the *Section of Modern Greek Studies* at Masaryk University in Brno. It achieved formal status in 1993. Dostálová then went on to rejuvenate the same specialisation at Charles University, where the department has been in existence since 2007, and where she taught almost until the end of her life.

Dostálová wrote an impressive number of scholarly papers and monographs. Her chief focus always remained the Late Antique Period, particularly the Hellenistic novel and the epic of Late Antiquity. But her books and papers on Byzantine culture, especially the Byzantine novel and Byzantine historiography, perhaps brought her greater renown, as did her work on Modern Greek language and culture. She was also an active translator of Greek texts of all three periods.

She is known for many of her academic books, such as *Il romanzo greco e i papiri* (Praha 1991), *Ancient Mysteries (Antická mystéria)*, Praha 1997, co-authored with Radislav Hošek), *Byzantine Scholarship (Byzantská vzdělanost)*, Praha 1990), *Dictionary of Greek Authors (Slovník řeckých spisovatelů)*, Praha 1975 and ²2006, co-authored with Bořivoj Borecký) and *The Greek Passion. History of an Opera (Řecké*

pašije. *Osud jedné opery*, Praha 2003, co-authored with Aleš Březina). She is much admired as well for her papers and reviews, and her authorship and co-authorship of textbooks (*Základní kurz novořeckého jazyka*, Brno 2000 and Praha ²2004, ³2008, co-authored with Catherine Franc-Sgourdeou; *Papyrologie (řecká, latinská, koptská)*, Praha 2006, ²2008; co-authored with Radislav Hošek et al.). Thanks to her translations of Greek prose and poetry, such as Josephus Flavius (*O starobylosti Židů*, Praha 1998), Anna Komnene (*Paměti byzantské princezny*, Praha 1996), Konstantinos Kavafis (*Nebezpečné touhy*, Praha 1997, co-authored with Jiří Pelán; *Básně*, Praha 2013, co-authored with Jiří Pelán and Vojtěch Hladký), Odysseas Elytis (*Bláznivý granátovník*, Praha 2003) and many others, the Czech public was able to gain acquaintance with many Greek authors who would otherwise have remained completely unknown to a broader readership. She contributed immensely to popularizing Greek culture in the Czech Republic in all of these fields, not neglecting even the cooperation with the mass media.

Růžena Dostálová was a respected member of the editorial board of *Byzantinoslavica*, as well as many academic societies, including the *Czech National Committee of Byzantine Studies*, *Czech National Committee of Balkanists*, *Czech Society for Modern Greek Studies* and the *Czech Literary Translators' Guild*.

Many awards and honours in recognition of her academic achievements were bestowed upon her during her lifetime. She received the gold medal of the *Society of Literary Translators in Athens* (2004) and the Medal of the *Learned Society of the Czech Republic* in 2011 for meritorious contributions to the advancement of knowledge. She was also awarded the Gold Cross 'Commandeur de l'ordre du Phoénix' by the President of the Republic of Greece, Mr. Carlos Papoulias, for her lifelong work (2010).

We, the editors of the present volume, had the good fortune to be taught by Růžena Dostálová at the *Department of Classical Studies* of Masaryk University, where by her own example she awakened our enthusiasm for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, and inspired us to set off on the career path we chose. We can never adequately express our gratitude for her pedagogy, which extended so far beyond the bounds of day-to-day teaching. She kindled in us the motivation to aim high, both in our academic work and in our lives.

It is our great happiness, and an obligation we take seriously, to continue the work Růžena Dostálová started at Masaryk University in Brno. Another of her important achievements lay in founding the *Czech Society for Modern Greek Studies* and initiating publication of the Society's annual. In publication since 2001, it was initially named *Přednášky české společnosti novořeckých studií (Διαλέξεις της Τσεχικής Εταιρείας Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών)* and, since 2008, has been *Neograeca Bohemica*.

We take particular pleasure in announcing that *Neograeca Bohemica* now moves a step closer to becoming a regular peer-reviewed scholarly journal focused on all

fields connected to late Byzantium and Modern Greece during the period extending from AD 1204 to the present. This will include literature, history, linguistics, cultural and social studies, and interdisciplinary studies.

Remembering the enthusiasm and endurance of Růžena Dostálová helps us to continue her work. We would like to dedicate the present volume to her memory. Professor Dostálová was not only a leading Hellenist ἀπὸ ἀρχαιοτάτων χρόνων μέχρι σήμερον, but a true humanist. Pulvis levis sit, Růžena!

Kateřina Bočková Loudová

Markéta Kulhánková

